

cont. incorporating an oxygen-free material directly into said surface to passivate the surface of said first conductive layer to reduce the ability of the first conductive layer to associate with oxygen;

B1 depositing a second conductive layer on said surface after incorporating the oxygen-free material into the surface; and

exposing said second conductive layer to a thermal process.

Please add new claims 76-85 as follows:

--76. (New) A method of forming a semiconductor device, comprising:

depositing a tungsten nitride layer having a surface;

incorporating an oxygen-free material directly into the surface of the tungsten nitride layer to passivate the surface of the tungsten nitride layer to reduce an ability of the tungsten nitride layer to associate with oxygen;

depositing a conductive layer on the surface of the tungsten nitride layer after incorporating the oxygen-free material into the surface of the tungsten nitride layer; and

exposing the conductive layer to a thermal process.

B2 77. (New) The method in claim 76 wherein depositing a tungsten nitride layer forms a capacitor plate and wherein the process further comprises depositing an insulator over the conductive layer and wherein exposing the conductive layer to a thermal process comprises flowing the insulator.

78. (New) The method of claim 77 wherein the conductive layer comprises copper.

79. (New) The method in claim 76 further comprising depositing a plug on which the tungsten nitride layer is thereafter deposited, and wherein exposing the conductive layer to a thermal process comprises flowing the conductive layer.

80. (New) The method in claim 76, wherein exposing the conductive layer to a thermal process comprises exposing the conductive layer to an alloy process.

81. (New) A method of forming a semiconductor device, comprising providing a first conductive layer having a surface and having an ability to associate with oxygen;

placing the surface of the first conductive layer in direct contact with an oxygen-free atmosphere under appropriate conditions to passivate the surface and reduce the ability of the first conductive layer to associate with oxygen;

providing a second conductive layer on the surface of the first conductive layer; and

subjecting the second conductive layer to a thermal process.

82. (New) The method in claim 81 wherein depositing a first conductive layer forms a capacitor plate and wherein the process further comprises depositing an insulator over the second conductive layer and wherein exposing the second conductive layer to a thermal process comprises flowing the insulator.

83. (New) The method of claim 82 wherein the second conductive layer comprises copper.

84. (New) The method in claim 81 further comprising depositing a plug on which the first conductive layer is thereafter deposited, and wherein exposing the second conductive layer to a thermal process comprises flowing the second conductive layer.

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